and (b) Out of six medium irrigation projects estimated to cost Rs. 108 crores to provide irrigation to about 47,000 hectares, appraisal of two projects have been returned for want of response from the State.

People living below poverty in the country

1124. SHRI SUBAS MOHANTY: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether during 1987-88 the number of people living below poverty line in the country has increased due to the increasing prices and decline in the value of rupee;

(b) whether Government propose to make any assessment in this regard;

(c) if so the details thereof;

(d) the time by when Government are likely to collect the requisite information; and

(e) if the answer to part (d) above be in negative, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (e) The estimates of persons below poverty line are prepared on the basis of the National Sample Survey (NSS) data on Household Consumer Expenditure. The latest estimates in this regard based on 38th Round of NSS are available for the year 1983-84. The estimates of persons below poverty line for 1987-88 would be made after the results of the 43rd Round of NSS on Consumer Expenditure, are available. Preliminary results of this Survey are likely to be available in a year's time.

Approval of Medium Irrigation Projects of Tamil Nadu

1125. SHRI K. V. THANGKABALU: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some medium irrigation projects of Tamil Nadu are proposed to be approved by the Planning Commission during the remaining period of the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) and (b) Two medium irrigation projects estimated to cost Rs. 15 crores, received from Tamil Nadu Government, have been examined and comments sent. These are expected to provide irrigation to an area of about 12 thousand hectares.

Setting up of a separate administrative cadre for North-Eastern States

1126. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government propose the setting up of separate administrative cadre for North-Eastern States; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Union Territory cadre will be merged in the proposed cadre; and

(c) whether the concerned States have been consulted; if so, their reactions to the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Formation of a North-Eastern Cadre for the All India Service is under consideration.

(b) There is no proposal to merge the Union Territories cadre in the proposed North-Eastern Cadre.

(c) The process of consultation with the States concerned is on.

Formulation of Action Programme for deep sea mining

1127. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any time bound action programme to undertake deep sea mining by the year 2005;

(b) the country from which Government propose to acquire know-how for deep sea mining ranging from 4500 to 6000 metres and develop the technology to extract metals from the Nodules; and

(c) the details thereof and the foreign exchange involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) A time bound action programme has been formulated for undertaking deep seabed mining of polymetallic nodules by the year 2008-2009 AD.

(b) and (c) At present, it is not proposed to acquire know-how from any country for deep seabed mining of polymetallic nodules or for the technology of extraction of metals from the nodules.

Pak Firing in Siachen and Poonch Areas

1128. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been indiscriminate firing by Pak troops in Siachen and Poonch areas during the last one year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any protest has been lodged by Government to stop the indiscriminating firing by Pakistan.

(d) the number of Indian military personnel injured and killed in this firing; and

(c) whether any action has been taken by Government to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) and (b) There have been cases of indiscriminate firming by Pak troops in the Poonch areas during the last one year. Such firing by Pak troops in this area have been a feature for many years. In the Siachen area, there have been cases of sporadic firing by Pak troops.

(c) Such incidents are taken up in flag meetings of the Army at the Sub-Sector or Sector Commanders' level.

Three rounds of talks have been held between the Defence Secretaries of the two countries for a solution of the Siachen issue.

(d) There have been a few casualties as a result of the firing incidents. It would not be desirable to disclose details.

(e) Our troops maintain constant vigil and are effectively deployed to meet any contingency on the borders.

Crash of MIG-21 in Jammu and Kashmir

1129. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an IAF Mig-21 aircraft crashed in May, 1988 at Laliher Village in the Kakopora area of Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) what is the number of people who died in the crash; and